

**BUSADMIN C721
Health Policy Analysis
Winter 2021 Course Outline**

**Health Policy and Management
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the field of health policy analysis. The scope includes administrative/managerial, clinical, and public policies. Students will be exposed to concepts and methods that will provide a foundation for conducting policy analysis, including gaining an understanding of how to approach descriptive, explanatory, and instrumental research. Current policy topics in health care will be used to demonstrate the practical relevance of policy analysis for health care managers. Small group activities will be used to help develop communication and analysis skills for use in health policy work settings.

CLASS DAY/TIME, INSTRUCTOR, AND COURSE SITE

Mondays

7:00-10:00pm

Online via Zoom and Avenue to Learn

Instructor

Neil Barr, PhD

Assistant Professor

barrn@mcmaster.ca

Course Website

<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the field of health policy analysis with particular emphasis on administrative/managerial, clinical, and public policy. After establishing a framework by which to analyze policy—which will include consideration of ideas (values, research evidence),

interests (stakeholders, pressure groups), and institutions (organization, rules)—various tools will be studied as a means of exploring and evaluating policy. Techniques from various disciplines (e.g., political science, sociology) will be used. Specific policy topics and applications will be discussed to illustrate issues in the policy analysis process. Group discussions, a mock policy dialogue, as well as written and oral presentations of analyses will be used to help develop skills in conducting and communicating health policy analysis through experiential learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of policy and policy analysis in Canadian health care
- Describe the stages and nature of the policy development process
- Demonstrate an understanding of the significant factors which impact policy development and outcomes
- Identify key ideas, interests, institutions that affect health policy development
- Demonstrate an understanding of how issues make it onto the policy agenda
- Explain why some policy solutions succeed while others fail
- Communicate effectively in the policy environment
- Design a policy/stakeholder dialogue
- Conduct a mini policy analysis

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required:

Course materials are available on Avenue to Learn
(<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>)

Free

EVALUATION

Learning in this course comes from readings, lectures, in-class discussion, small group work, as well as participation, preparation of assignments, and out-of-class analysis. Group work is expected. In these cases, group members will share the same grade unless all group members agree to an adjustment.

Components and Weights

Class Participation	Participation in group discussions, including any online forums. Participation is also expected for group presentations.	20%
Assignment #1 (in groups)	Policy Report Presentation regarding the analysis of a health policy document.	25%
Assignment #2 (in groups)	Stakeholder Dialogue Protocol for a proposed stakeholder dialogue, including facilitation guide	25%
Assignment #3 (in pairs)	Mini Policy Analysis Outline/proposal (5%); paper (25%)	30%

Class Participation

Students are expected to post their photograph on the Avenue to Learn (A2L) system. Participation will not be graded by simply counting each contribution a student makes (i.e., the quality of contribution is most important). Students are expected to come to class prepared (having reviewed the assigned readings) and to be involved in group discussions. Students are also expected to attend all classes.

Assignments

Further guidance on the three assignments outlined below will be posted on A2L. Note: If a student has conducted a project or assignment for another course on a similar topic to one proposed for this course, they are required to obtain permission from the instructor/s in advance of proceeding with the topic. This is to ensure that projects or assignments are sufficiently different from one another. If in doubt, please contact the instructor.

Assignment #1 – Policy Report

The purpose of this assignment is to assist students in understanding various course concepts through the examination of current issues in health policymaking.

Working in assigned groups, this assignment will involve analyzing/assessing a recent report related to Canadian health policy by identifying and applying concepts from the course. Each group will be assigned a different topic (group assignments will occur during the first week of class). Students will present to the class (and facilitate relevant discussion) the class/week after the associated concepts/material have been covered.

Assignment #2 – Stakeholder Dialogue

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to become actively involved in health policy analysis by identifying relevant concepts and issues using a practical example of stakeholder engagement, while exposing students to a range of policy topics. In addition, it will help students to become familiar with a typical format and style of communicating in the policy environment.

Working in assigned teams, students will select one important issue in health policy and develop a protocol for a stakeholder dialogue to inform policymaking in a selected jurisdiction. Each team will design their own approach to conduct an effective dialogue to inform policy development on their chosen topic.

Assignment #3 – Mini Policy Analysis

The purpose of the final assignment is to pull together the concepts and techniques covered during the course and apply them to an interesting policy issue. Students will conduct a mini policy analysis on a topic of their choice (subject to final approval from the instructor). Topics pertaining to countries/jurisdictions other than Canada are acceptable. The topic must be analyzed in either: 1) the agenda-setting stage of the policy cycle; or 2) the policy formulation stage of the policy cycle.

Specific policy analysis tools/concepts must be used in the analysis. Examples of possible topics and published policy analyses will be posted on the A2L site. Students are required to submit an outline (of approximately one page) describing the proposed policy analysis. The outline is intended to make sure students are on the right track. The corresponding final written document is to be approximately 2,500 words.

Grade Conversion

At the end of the course, overall percentage grades will be converted to letter grades in accordance with the following conversion scheme:

LETTER GRADE	PER CENT	POINTS
A+	90-100	12
A	85-89	11
A-	80-84	10
B+	75-79	9
B	70-74	8
B-	60-69	7
F	00-59	0

Communication and Feedback

Students who wish to correspond with the instructor or TA directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Administrative Assistant. Instructors are encouraged to conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences (e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript - notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism (the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained)
2. Improper collaboration in group work
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

In this course we will be using a web-based service ("Turnitin") to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to have their work reviewed through Turnitin must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not have their work reviewed through Turnitin. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., an online search). To see the Turnitin Policy, please go to:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/turnitin/students/>

ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning, and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”; <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf>). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g., use of A2L, WebEx, or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK & PENALTY FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS

Late Submissions

Deadlines for assignments are set. All work must be submitted to the corresponding A2L Assignments folder on the due date and time as stated in the Course Schedule. Do not submit work by email. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for every 24 hours, or part thereof, they are submitted past their due date and time. If you anticipate being unable to complete an assignment on the due date, please contact the instructor prior to the due date. Requests for extensions will not be considered within 48 hours of the deadline except under exceptional circumstances.

Missed Class Participation

Where students miss a regularly scheduled midterm or class participation for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office, the weight for that test/participation will be distributed across other evaluative components of the course at the discretion of the instructor. Documentation explaining such an absence must be provided to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office within five (5) working days upon returning to school.

To document absences for health related reasons, please provide to Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and the McMaster University Student Health Certificate which can be found on the DeGroote School of Business website at:

<https://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-applications/>

Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form as this is for Undergraduate students only. University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) medical certificates per year after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.

To document absences for reasons other than health related, please provide Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and documentation supporting the reason for the absence.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor, normally within the first three (3) weeks of classes, by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to

comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g., on A2L, in the classroom) to the various learning activities of C721 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies, and to act accordingly.

Lack of awareness of the course policies cannot be invoked at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.